

offer at face value. A fixed price contract is only a good deal if you believe the vendor can perform the work described within the cost projections estimated.

Your investigation of the tritium program should incorporate an analysis of the above issues as well as those mentioned in my previous letter. While the CBO report could have shed light on the pros and cons of each option to produce tritium, it only clouded the matter further. The General Accounting Office report should ensure a balanced discussion of this issue that is so vital to the National Security of our Nation.

With kindest regards and best wishes.

Sincerely,

STROM THURMOND.

SENATOR DAN COATS

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I take this opportunity, on our last day of session, to say farewell to my colleague, Senator DAN COATS of Indiana. While we have disagreed on many issues, I note that he was a supporter of one of the most important legislative accomplishments of the past few years—the Family and Medical Leave Act. He has also long been a champion of government support for adoption, and is, as am I, a strong advocate for after school, tutoring and mentoring programs. Recently, he helped move through the Congress the reauthorizing bill for “Head Start”, one of our most effective programs for disadvantaged children.

DAN COATS is a long time member of the Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America, and was recently elected president of the organization. I know that he is looking forward to devoting more time to his Big Brother responsibilities, and I wish him all the best.

SENATOR DIRK KEMPTHORNE

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, as the Senate completes its work and the 105th Congress comes to a close, I want to take this opportunity to say farewell to one of my colleagues who has decided to leave this body and pursue other activities.

The junior senator from Idaho, DIRK KEMPTHORNE, and I were both elected to the Senate in 1992. We have served together for the past 6 years on the Environment and Public Works Committee. While we have disagreed on many environmental issues, I have always enjoyed working with him and appreciated his personal kindness. He is a gentleman of impeccable manners and good humor. And he is known to all his colleagues as one of the “workhorses” of the Senate: a senator who does his work quietly and responsibly, and does not insist on getting all the credit for the results.

My very best wishes to Senator KEMPTHORNE as he leaves Washington to return to his home in Idaho, and the best of luck in all that he does in the years to come.

PRaise AND FAREWELL FOR SENATOR WENDELL FORD

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I would like to say a few words before the close of the 105th Congress about my friend and colleague, WENDELL FORD, the very distinguished senior senator from the great state of Kentucky. His retirement from the Senate this year leaves this body of government missing a cornerstone that I am not sure we can replace anytime soon.

From the heartland of these United States, he is a strong, resonant voice for the working people of this nation. This Senate chamber will sound a bit hollow without that gruff, but friendly voice crying out for “order” in these chambers.

I have served for six years now with Senator FORD. During our time together I have known him as a stalwart ally in our party and a valuable friend. As an indefatigable champion for Kentucky, he never betrayed that trust that the people who elected him four times to the United States Senate bestowed upon him. That he has been able to keep his feet firmly grounded in Kentucky's interests while extending his helping hand to Senators from every region of this nation is a testament to his skill, temperament and wisdom.

I cannot speak of Senator FORD without expressing my admiration for his leadership on the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, particularly his service as chairman and ranking member of the Subcommittee on Aviation. No issue is small to Senator FORD if it is a big issue to his colleague. I remember early in my tenure here that he worked with me on an issue that I have struggled with every since I came to House of Representatives and later as a Senator. We needed the Federal Aviation Administration to work with other Federal agencies and clean up an abandoned radar site on Mt. Tamalpais in my home county of Marin.

I had been here only a year or so before Senator FORD sliced through the bureaucratic tangle and resolved this local problem at long last in the 1994 FAA Reauthorization bill.

He was also there for the State of California when we were trying to get the California Cruise Ship Industry Revitalization Act accepted in conference. He stood in the door of that conference—refusing to call it complete—until our provision was accepted. This provision has provided enormous benefits for our ports in California, and we are grateful for his untiring assistance.

While helping on these local and State issues, he has been the strongest advocate for our airports, particularly in using the Airport trust fund for what it was intended modernizing and upgrading airports across the country to keep them safe and competitive. I was proud to see that we named the FAA reauthorization bill this year, the Wendell H. Ford National Air Trans-

portation System Improvement Act. The truth is I feel like every time we have voted for the FAA reauthorization bill it has had his stamp upon it.

I wish the Senator from Kentucky a fond farewell—but not goodbye. He will always be in my thoughts and in my heart. And I know his voice will still echo throughout these hallowed halls—and in the halls of our memories, we will forever remember WENDELL FORD's decency, compassion, and plain old common sense.

JOHN GLENN—AMERICAN HERO

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, in 1962, a few weeks before becoming the first American to orbit the Earth, JOHN GLENN appeared on the cover of Life magazine under the header, “Making of a Brave Man.” JOHN GLENN is indeed a brave man, but to those of us who have served with him in the United States Senate, he is much more. He is a skilled legislator, a good friend, and an honorable and decent person.

For the generation who remembers JOHN GLENN's historic trip to space 36 years ago, his return this month abroad the space shuttle is truly special. At that time, the United States was in the midst of the cold war with the Soviet Union. The Soviets could boast many achievements in space, including the launching of the first satellite. It was a tense time, and ours hopes as a nation were with JOHN GLENN and the U.S. space program.

On February 20, 1962, America held it's collective breath as GLENN's *Friendship 7* capsule circled the earth three times. During this mission, JOHN GLENN showed us why he was our hero. When a faulty signal erroneously warned that the capsule's heat shields might come loose, he remained calm and cool, even as he watched fiery bits of spacecraft flash past him during reentry into the Earth's atmosphere. The entire country beamed with pride at this heroic accomplishment.

President Kennedy called space “a new ocean”, and JOHN GLENN will go down in history as one of it's first and most important explorers. His flight opened the door to future missions, such as the Mercury program, Gemini program, and eventually the Apollo program that put man on the moon.

In a few weeks, America will once again beam with pride when JOHN GLENN lifts off from Kennedy Space Center abroad the Space Shuttle *Discovery*. As opposed to his first mission, which lasted five hours, this mission is scheduled to last nine days. During that time, Senator GLENN will participate in a number of experiments designed to find parallels between the physical stress of space flight and the natural aging process.

Scientists are hopeful of finding out why astronauts and the elderly suffer from similar ailments, such as bone and muscle loss, balance disorders and sleep disturbances. Understanding these physiological characteristics